

RJ Eldridge

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details available upon request

Education

MLA 2011 University of South Florida

Africana Studies; Literature and Critical Theory.

Thesis: "Shifting Blackness: How the Arts Revolutionize Black Identity in the Postmodern West"

BA 2006 University of South Florida

Dual Major: English Literature and Africana Studies.

Employment

Lead Artist and Instructor, [Art Institute of Chicago Teen Lab](#) (2016-2017)

-Formulated curriculum, program delivery, recruitment and exhibition for Teen Lab program in AiC's Department of Youth and Family Services Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. Curriculum available upon request.

Artist and Instructor, [One Summer Chicago](#) (Summer 2016)

-Collaborated with Chicago Mayor's office, Chicago Transit Authority, Department of Family & Support Services and Lawrence Hall Youth Services to deliver a 7-week long photographic and arts intensive for ten young adults. Students visited major arts centers and Chicago neighborhoods and produced work for installation and exhibit in three CTA Blue Line and one CTA Green Line station.

Mentor, [The Aspen Institute](#) (Summer 2016)

-Participated in and aided in facilitation of Aspen Institute Creative Youth Seminar in Aspen, CO for the 2016 Aspen Ideas Festival.

-Produced photographic and textual work in response and documentation of the seminar.

-Participated in and aided in facilitation of Aspen Institute Creative Youth Seminar in Chicago.

Teaching Artist Corps, [Young Chicago Authors](#) (2013-Present)

-Program delivery, recruitment, and evaluation for public programming.

-Three school residency: curriculum development, workshop delivery, recruitment.

-Organization and assisting with delivery of *Louder Than A Bomb* Youth Poetry Festival.

-Coordinate and deliver programming for Chicago Beat youth journalism program.

-Outreach and fee-for-service performances, readings, and workshop delivery.

Associate Director, [Chicago Slam Works House Ensemble](#) (2014-2015)

-Program delivery, drafting and co-coordinating works for the house ensemble

-Directing workshops and research for content

-Lead writer, *REDLINED*

Teaching Artist, [Chicago Slam Works](#) (2014-2015)

-Program delivery, recruitment, workshop delivery for public programming in Chicagoland schools

Co-instructor, Ci3 University of Chicago [South Side Stories](#) (2013-14)

-Program and workshop delivery in U of Chicago's Center for Interdisciplinary Inquiry and Innovation in Sexual and Reproductive Health (Ci3) South Side Stories summer initiative.

-Co-Developed curriculum in photographic practice and storytelling and photography as narrative for program youth.

-Produced visual work (photography and digital collage) for use in touring program and as final work in digital stories.

Instructor, Johnson College Prep (2012-2013)

- 11th grade United States History and AP US History Instructor.
- Developed curriculum combining literacy, cultural relevance and study of historic and political documents.
- Created, curated and delivered Black Art enrichment course.

Instructor, University of South Florida (2008-2011)

- Instructed Intro to the Black Experience.
- Full curriculum design, consulting, office hours, evaluation.

Selected Published Work

- "A Brief Ride" (narrative) *Propter Nos, Vol 2. Issue 1.* 12 October 2017.
- "The Art of Yearning" (essay) *Wildness Literary Journal* 8. 28 April 2017
- "Great Pain into Art: On Tomás Q. Morín's *Patient Zero*." (essay / review) *The Blueshift Journal*. 11 April 2017.
- "A Poetics against Obscuring: The Black Underclass in the Work of Gwendolyn Brooks" (essay) in Lansana, Quraysh et al, ed. *The Whiskey of Our Discontent: Gwendolyn Brooks as Conscience and Change Agent*. Haymarket Books. May 2017.
- "On *The Turner House*" (essay/review) *Vinyl Poetry and Prose*. 10 July 2016.
- "Englewood" (poem) *We Speak Chicagoese: Anthology*. Side Street Press. 2016.
- "Good News" (writing) and "Sky" (photography) *Obsidian Journal* 41.1 and 41.2. April 2016.
- Five Works (images). *Elsewhere Literary Magazine: African Poetry Issue*. 2015.
- Two Works. *Puerto del Sol*. 2015.
- "Take, Eat." (essay) *Apogee*. 2015.
- "Even Resurrection, Even Insurrection." (essay) *The Offing*. October 2015.
- "Counternarratives As Healing and Photography As Self & Community Care: A Conversation with RJ Eldridge." (interview) *BlackGirlInOm*. 24 June 2015.
- "(Still) Playing in the Dark: From People of Color to Black and Back Again." [RaceBaitr](#). 12 June 2015.
- "On Rising." [The Offing](#). 12 May 2015
- "The Bard Speaks: A Conversation with Ladan Osman, Author of *The Kitchen-Dweller's Testimony*." [BlackGirlInOm](#). 20 March 2015.
- REDLINED*. (theater) Lead Writer (2015)
- One Day When We Are All Robots* (theater). Co-author, Associate Director (2014)
- "[Shifting Blackness: How the Arts Revolutionize Black Identity in the Postmodern West](#)." (thesis) Author (2011)
- The Southern Griot* Literary Journal. Editor-in-Chief (2005; 2011)
- "Loneliness" in Stafford, Tim, ed. *Learn Then Burn*. Poetry (2010)

Solo Exhibitions

2017 *Subterranean Politics*, Chicago Art Department, Chicago, IL

Group Visual Art Exhibitions

- 2017 *Daughters of Mmiri* (commissioned photography), Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA
- 2017 *The Art of Blackness*, Block 37, Chicago, IL
- 2017 *BlackBox: An Afrofuturist Opus*, LeRoy Neiman Center, Art Institute of Chicago
- 2017 *100 Canvases*, Silver Room, Chicago, IL
- 2017 *Old Black Magic*, Chicago Art Department, Chicago, IL
- 2016 *Not Another Pretty Face* (commissioned photographic work) Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL
- 2016 *Shared Language: A Community Classroom*, Washington Park Incubator, Chicago, IL
- 2015 *Chicago Jazz: A Photographer's View*, U Chicago, Logan Center, Chicago, IL *Honorable Mention
- 2015 *Corner Stores: A Co-Op Exhibition to Feed the People*, Carlos & Dominguez Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 2015 *Chromophobia*, Cultura, Chicago, IL
- 2015 *Sight and Semblance*, NEEDS, Chicago, IL
- 2014 *SZALON* (collaborating with Krista Franklin), U Chicago, Logan Center, Chicago, IL

2014 *How to Make a Hood* (collaborating with Amir George), Chicago, IL
2014 *100 Canvases For We the People*, Silver Room, Chicago, IL
2014 *The Gala*, City Point Lofts, Chicago, IL
2013 *Green Line*, Fulton Street Collective, Chicago, IL

Film/Television

“Manumission” Documentary on black artists. Dir. David Weathersby (2017)
“Akata.” 14:00. Dir. Felix Oforu Yeboah (2015)
“Speculum / Speculum” variable. With Cheryl Pope at Galleria Bianconi (2014)
Lexus Presents: Verses and Flow 5:00 (2013)

Selected Workshops

Project: Rebuild - Rebuild Foundation, Chicago, IL (2017)
Ode to the City - BING Art Books, Chicago, IL (August 2016)
Hyde Park Art Center - (5 week residency, November-December 2015) Chicago, IL
Young Chicago Authors - Wordplay (month-long residency), Chicago, IL (2015, 2016)
Young Chicago Authors in-school and after school residencies, Chicago, IL (2014-2016): Urban Prep Academy,
Team Englewood HS, John Hope HS, Gwendolyn Brooks HS, Sara E. Goode Stem Academy, Simeon
Career Academy
Washington Park Arts Incubator – Young Chicago Authors Book Release, Chicago, IL (2014)
Johnson College Prep – Chicago, IL (2012-13)
St. Augustine’s University – Raleigh, NC (2013)
Pinellas County Family Resources – St. Petersburg/Largo, FL, USA (2007-2009)
Haven Poe Shelter – Tampa, FL, USA (2007)
Riverside College – Tampa, FL, USA (2008; 2009)
Poetry Center of Chicago – Chicago, IL, USA (2008)
WMNF Lizz Straight Prison Tour – various, FL, USA (2009-10)

Recent Awards and Recognition

2017 3Arts Award, Visual Art (nominee)
2017 Kimbilio Fiction Fellowship

Press

2017 [AFROPUNK](#) review of RJ Eldridge’s Party Noire Photography
2016 “[22 Brilliant Black Male Writers You Need To Be Reading](#),” *TrulyTafakari*
2015 MCA Live Ekphest: <http://www2.mcachicago.org/event/mca-live-ekphest-a-festival-of-art-word/>
2015 Blavity [Review of Reading at the Poetry Foundation](#)
2014 Gallery 400: [A Feminist Perspective on Gun Violence](#)
2014 REDLINED Reviews: [NewCity](#); [Stage and Cinema](#); [Chicago Stage Standard](#)

Selected Organizations, Affiliate Institutions, Clients & Patrons

[Party Noire](#) (Official photographer)
Theaster Gates Studio, Chicago (Photography)
The Aspen Institute (Creative Youth Seminar Chicago collaboration)
The Aspen Institute (Creative Youth Seminar, Aspen)

2016 Creating Change Conference (Photography commission)
Wrigley Company: 5 Gum (Poetry and performance commission)
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (Performance of interpretation of Doris Salcedo exhibition)
University of Illinois-Chicago (Poetry Feature)
University of Chicago (Digital Storytelling; digital collage commission)
DePaul University (Classroom talk)
Amnesty International (Poetry)
Auburn Theological Seminary (Photography commission)

Selected Invited Lectures/Speaking Engagements/Conference Panels

2017 Panelist, *4x5: The Stories Behind the Frames*, Soho House, Chicago, IL
2017 Artist's Talk, *Subterranean Politics*, Chicago Art Department, Chicago, IL
2017 Panelist, "Mindfulness in Critical Art Practices", Lake FX Chicago, Chicago, IL
2017 Panelist, Open Engagement Conference, Chicago, IL
2017 Panelist, "What Can a Party Change?" Allied Media Conference, Detroit, MI
2017 Panelist, "The Black Photographic Image: Future Perspectives," Allied Media Conf., Detroit, MI
2017 Panelist, Chi Teen Lit Fest, Chicago, IL
2016 BING Art Books, Chicago, IL
2016 Panelist, "Cultivating Black Joy," Allied Media Conference, Detroit, MI
2013 *Relevance, Rigor and Rhetoric* Conference, St. Augustine's University, Durham, NC.
2012 Association of Caribbean Studies Panelist, "Patrimony, Diaspora, and the Future of Haiti"
2011 USF Africana Studies Thesis Defense, "Shifting Blackness: How the Arts Revolutionize Black Identity in the Postmodern West"
2011 Institute on Black Life Colloquium Presentation, "Representing the Unrepresented"
2011 Negritud Conference Speaker, "Representing the Unrepresented"
2010 USF Institute on Black Life Panelist, "Leadership for the 21st Century"
2008 Community Presenter, "What They Didn't Teach You about Black History"
2005 USF Africana Studies Department Colloquium Presenter, "Defining Blackness"
2004 Speaker, USF, "50 Year Anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott"